

A TALE OF CHRISTMAS JOY IN THE FAIRYLAND OF WIS

Magic Spectacles Made a Man's Heart Hard, But Finally Led to a Great Joyous Christmas.

HERE was a boy named Myron Holmes, who, with his sister Bessie, lived with a guardian, who was a very hard-hearted, cruel and mean man. His name was George W. Granitt. Before he was made the guardian of these children he had been a kindly, welldisposed man, but suddenly he was disposed man, but suddenly he was transformed into one of the most vindictive, unfeeling creatures that I have ever seen. The awful change had been caused by a pair of magic spectacles, which came into his possession. Looking once through these spectacles caused one to become hard, cruel and mean; wearing them constantly or frequently made the heart grow callous to all suffering, full of hate and envy, and made the wearer take a delight in giving pain to everybody. Mr. Granitt wore the spectacles until he was the meanest man in the world. He was constantly considering how he could rid himself of the two children, for he hated them more than he did anything in all the world.

Every day he pondered over the problem, but he was afraid of the police, and wished to destroy them in some way that would be safe and easy. The children were so kindly and loving that it angered him to see them feed stray cats or dogs or throw crumbs to the half-starved, almost frozen birds, or bring them to the fireside to warm them, and he would kick out the poor cats or dogs into the cold, or wring the necks of the birds and throw their bodles out upon the snow, smiling a smile of fiendish delight as he did so. Many a stear had Bessie shed as she watched him commit some act of cruelty, but she never suspected the awful purpose of her guardian's wicked transformed into one of the most vin-

Many a stear had Bessie shed as she watched him commit some act of cruelty, but she never suspected the awful purpose of her guardian's wicked heart, so when one day he told her to look through the magic spectacles she obeyed him without hesitation. She was not conscious of any change, but instantly her heart hardened, and she lost all her tenderness and pity for helpless animals, and felt at once a cruel delight in seeing her guardian kick the dog. Her pretty blue eyes lost at once their soft, kindly light, and her mouth took a sharp, hard curve. Her brother, Myron, was amazed to see her when he came home throw scalding hot water upon the cat, and he stared at her as if she had been transformed. Her guardian smiled grimly, for he was pleased. Then he took Myron out for a ride in his automobile, and when they were far up the riverside road he tossed the boy out suddenly, and without waiting to see what became of him he dashed away in the darkness.

Fell Into Wishville. Myron fell, not as the wicked guardian had expected, into the roaring river to be drowned at once, but by great good luck upon a raft of logs floating along near shore. They drifted along with him without touching the river bank and before morning he was many miles away from home, so that when the sun rose he was in a strange land. Strange birds stood up strange land. Strange birds stood up-on the shore, strange animals stared at him from the forest, and strange trees and flowers grew along the banks. At home the snow lay deep on the ground. but here all was as fresh and green as in June, and the air was warm and perfumed with flower scents. Nuts and fruits grew and beautiful butter-flies flitted in the air. The raft coming close to shore, Myron sprang on land and walked along the riverside for a distance. None of the animals seemed to fear him at all, and even the birds sat undisturbed on their nests when he passed. He ate some fruit and drank passed. He ate some fruit and drank from a spring among white rocks, and strolled farther on until he came to a cliff that shut off all passage along the river. Here he paused, and was about to turn back, when a large snowy owl flew up and, settling down on a tree trunk, spoke to him.

"I suppose" said the and blobbe.

suppose," said the owl, blinking, "that you are one of those things they call boys. What are you doing here, I fear that I am lost," replied My-

"Nothing is lost here. You are only out of place. If you wish to leave take the tissue paper route to Wishville."
"What is that?" asked the boy.
The owl pointed with its claw at the wall of rock, and Myron saw there a great circular sheet of tissue paper.

great circular sheet of tissue paper spread against the bluff, looking exactly like one of those big paper hoops through which the bareback riders jump. The owl added:

jump. The owl added:
"Who dares to break through this
paper falls into Wishville at once."
"Don't it hurt?" asked Myron.
"Don't know," said the bird. "Never don't know," said the bird. "Never

tried it. I've always been satisfied here, but as no one has ever come back by this route I imagine they were either killed or else too pleased to return."

"Sure it lands you in Wishville?" asked Myron, dublously. "What sort of a place is it?"

a place is it?"

"Can't tell you anything about it.
Everybody must try it for himself.
You cannot stay here, anyhow, so you
might as well try it at once,"

Myron reflected but an instant, and
then threw himself against the tissue
paper. He fell through at once, and, to
his surprise, the great rocky wall was
only about a foot thick, so he landed
without injury on the other side, finding himself in a great garden filled with
statutes and fountains, where many

boys and girls were playing. It did not take him many minutes to discover that this was Wishville, where one has everything in the way of pleasure that one desires, simply by thinking of it. If you want a barrel of candy, there it is before you; if you wish to sail in a boat upon a lake, there's the boat and the lake at once; if you wish to see a menagerie or a dog fight or anything else, you have it as soon as the wish is formed. In fact, there is nothing you can think of in the way of pleasure or pastime that you cannot instantly possess except in one respect—you can-



THERE SAT BESSIE LIKE A QUEEN ON HER THRONE.

not work, nor can you study in Wishville, nor can you wish for and possess anything connected with the outside world. Nobody there can wish for his friends or relatives to be with him to enjoy it all, for each one has to break through the tissue paper shield for himself. Myron plunged into all the delights of this wonderful place, for he had never had much fun in his short life, and there was no pleasure that he did not sample. From morning until late at night he pursued each joy eagerly, and tasted every bliss, and it is no wonder that for a time he forgot all about his sister and guardian.

Think of having every kind of toy, every game, each delicious thing to eat without stint, no duties, and no one to not work, nor can you study in Wish-

without stint, no duties, and no one to scold, even if you stayed up all night, and you will perceive that one would scarcely have time to think of his relatives and friends outside. So Myron abandoned himself entirely to all these novel sensations, and thought of nothing but some new pleasure until he had ing but some new pleasure until he had tried over and over again every form of enjoyment and became thoroughly sick and tired of playing, idling and eating. Then he began to want something to do, for he had begun to learn that pleasure alone never satisfies any one. It is only because we have some work to do that play seems so enticing, and all play like all work mokes a dult and all play, like all work, makes a dull boy. But he seen discovered that there is no work in Wishville, no occupation for the mind tired of pleasure, and that everybody after a few weeks, just sat around. Bethee and tired the seen discovered the seen and the seen discovered that there is no work in Wishville, no occupation for the mind tired the seen discovered that there is no work in Wishville, no occupation for the mind tired the seen discovered that there is no work in Wishville, no occupation for the mind tired the seen discovered th

everybody after a few weeks, just sat around, listless and tired, wishing for something new to amuse himself with, and not getting it, yawning and stretching from daylight until dark. He finally decided to try to return to the land where he had met the solemn owl, and at once started to find the place through which he had fallen.

This took several days of diligent search, which restored his good temper, as it was really work, and hard work, too. He was a long way from the place, of course, as he had wandered far into the garden of delight, and there were so many paths that he was often confused, but he persisted until at last one evening he suddenly came to the wall all grown over with came to the wall all grown over with climbing vines bearing flowers, so that it was scarcely to be recognized, but there sat the owl on a tree blinking solemnly and looking as wise as owls

always do.
"Well," said Myron, "I'm back again. I've had enough, and I'd like to fall out at once, please." "That's not as easy as you may imagine," replied the owl. "There are conditions."

'What are they?" Myron asked. Answered the Owl's Question. "No one can leave here unless he can answer a question which I ask. If he can do so out he goes at once, and, beside that, if he can ask me a question which I cannot answer he can have two wishes granted to him as a parting

Myron pondered for a moment, then he said:
"Go ahead and ask your question.
Probably I can't answer it, but I'll

The owl looked more solemn than ever for a minute, and then said:

"What animal has no hair, no wool, no fur, no feathers, no scales, no horny plates, nor yet a smooth skin." "Gee, but that's a hard one!" cried

"Gee, but that's a hard one!" cried Myron.

"It is, indeed," said the bird; "and, although I have asked many that question, it never has been answered yet. I'll give you pienty of time to think, so don't fret."

Suddenly, as Myron thought of all the animals he had ever seen, the porcupine popped into his mind, and almost instantly he shouted;

"I've got it! It's the porcupine!"
The owl almost fell off the branch. "Yes," he said, "that's it, and you are a very smart boy. Now you may go home as soon as you want to."

"But you said if I asked you a question!" exclaimed Myron.
"Oh, yes; I forgot, but it's impossible to ask me anything that I can't answer," replied the bird.
"Then tell me why a donkey never will cross even a little narrow stream without making an awful fues?" without making an awful fuss?"
"Does a donkey do that?" cried the
owl in great distress.

'Always," said Myron. "He seems to dread crossing a stream."
"That's very strange," said the owl.
"I never heard of it before. I am sure I never could tell you the reason for such a remarkable action." "Then I'll get a wish!" cried Myron in great glee.

"I shall certainly keep my promise, but I'd like to know why the donkey

ts so queerly."
'I can't tell you," said Myron, "but I want you to grant me this wish; I want you to make my guardian a good, kind man, and give my sister her former tender disposition.

His Sister in Danger. "You really have two wishes in one-there," said the bird, "but I'll overlook that, as you don't wish anything for yourself, as a selfish boy would have done. Your wish shall be granted, and done. Your wish shall be granted, and even now your guardian has begun to change, for only last week he found that his legs were turning into stone, and it frightened him so that he did the only thing possible to prevent his whole body petrifying slowly."

"What did he do?" inquired Myron.

"He reversed the magic spectacles, and that makes them act directly opposite to their former manner, and

and that makes them act directly opposite to their former manner, and causes those who look through them to become kindly and generous. The cure began at once, and the first thing he did was to start off to seek for your sister and yourself—"
"Is my sister lost, too?" cried Myron.
"Yes. She is lost in the Hindernis-

"Yes. She is lost in the Hindernisson forest, a dark, gloomy woodland, where wolves, bears and other ravenous beasts roam, and where damp, noisome toadstools are the only growing things, where glant bats and hideous snakes make the night dreadful, and where no one can live except witches and goblins. There she sits on a rock all day long, yet the wild animals never attack her, for she has a wonderful and uncanny power. Whatever she looks at turns into stone instantly, and thus she has surrounded herself with an engranger distance of street lines. mous circle of stone animals and

"If you go there when the moon is full, and the night before Christmas it will be in that condition, you will find on the border of the forest a small plant growing in the show. This is the Moon Creper, and it bears tiny berries of a green color, of which you must gather a quantity, and by some trick or other you must rub these berries on her eyes. She will be instantly cured, but beware that she does not look at you, or you will be turned into stone."

"How shall I keep her from seeing me?" asked Myron.

"Ah, I wish I could tell you, but, alas! I don't know how. I can't think of any way at all."

"For one with such a reputation for wisdom or

wisdom as you have," said Myron, "you have less of the real thing than anybody I've ever met." "I got my reputation by looking wise and keeping my mouth shut, like very many men in the world," said the owl. "It I really knew all that people give me credit for I'd not be an owl."

me credit for I'd not be an owl. I'd be a bureau of information."
"Well," said Myron, "where shall I go to meet my guardian? Tell me that."

"That's easy. Jump, as before, through the paper and on the other side, after you have walked along a few miles by the river, you will come to a wide road, where you will wait until he comes along in an automobile."

"Thank you," said Myron, "and let me beg your pardon for hinting that you didn't know much, for, after all, you are the your wiscet hind leave. you are the very wisest bird I have

Thank you," said the owl, smiling, "Thank you," said the owl, smiling, "I forgive you. I only wish I could tell you just how to manage to prevent your sister seeing you."
"I'll find some way if my guardian doesn't know how," said Myron, and then he sprang quickly through the tissue paper that separated the garden of Wishville from the outside world.

As before, he found himself in twinkling across the barrier of rock, and once more beside the smiling river. He saw a road that he was very sure he had not seen before, and he walked along it as the owl had instructed him, hoping to meet his

guardian at any moment. When he had gone perhaps a mile he suddenly spied a figure in the shade of the trees on one side of the road, and drawing nearer he saw that it was a beautiful water sprite, sitting at the edge of a fountain, and so absorbed in con-templating her own reflection in the water that she did not see the ap-proaching boy. In her hand she held a mirror, which obably was not large enough to sat-

In her hand she held a mirror, which probably was not large enough to satisfy her desires, for, after a quick glance at its gleaming surface, she returned to the water's velvet-surface again. Myron stepped softly over the grass, and was almost at her side when she looked around and, with a startled shriek, she darted into the forest shades, dropping the mirror at his feet. He picked it up, and, just like a boy, without reflecting that perhaps the water sprite could not obtain another mirror easily, he put it in his pocket and walked on. I really think,

mense forest, and we will have difficulty in finding Bessie there, for we must proceed very carefully to avoid being seen by her and turned into stone. I came near enough to it once, and I don't want to take the chances now. The ground, too, will be covered with snow there, and that will make the search very difficult."

"Let's start off at once, and lose no time then!" cried Myron. "We can devise some plan, I guess, as we go along."

Wonders of a Forest of Petrified Animals

and the Very Place Where Every

Wish is Instantly Gratified.

Found Bessie in the Forest.

His guardian started off at once, and they flew along the road with light ning speed. Mile after mile was co ning speed. Mile after mile was covered, until they emerged from the fair and sunny land through which they had been traveling for days, where fruits and flowers grew all along the roadside, and came to a dark forest of pines and hemlocks, where snow was visible in the gullies, and all the leaves and grasses were faded and brown. Night was coming on and Myron ad-

vised making a big fire so that the wild beasts of the forest would be afraid and avoid them. He felt in his pocket and by good luck found some matches, so it was not long before they had a royal bonfire in the darkness. It undoubtedly kept away the bears and wolves, for they saw none at all, although they heard them lots of times howling and growling far off in the deep wood. Myron fell asleep by the fire, but woke up suddenly while dreaming that the water sprite was of the fire, but woke up suddenly while dreaming that the water sprite was begging for her mirror. He felt in his coat pocket to see if it was still there, and then he resolves to leave it at the fountain when they went back again. When morning came he saw many tracks in the deep snow of animals that had been roaming around, and the thought of the creatures that had been turned to stone by his sister's glances turned to stone by his sister's glances coming to him, he exclaimed: "Let us follow these tracks and see

if some of them will not lead to the place where Bessie is hiding. The owl said animals were constantly going to look at her, and perhaps we may happen upon some of them who are seek-

'A very good idea," said his guardian. So off they went, the deep foot-prints in the snow of some great bear or wolf showing as plainly as a path the course to follow. Myron was some-what afraid that at any moment they might bappen to avertake the animal might happen to overtake the animal and was ready to run with all his might, but as the day wore on he felt more confident, and so in the afternoon he had almost forgotten to think about the possibility of seeing the creature they were following. Therefore, when suddenly they saw a great black bear only a few yards in front plowing along through the deep snow he was so startled that he sank down on his knee, but as he did so he saw the bear halt, throw its head up and sniff the air.

With his heart in his mouth, Myron crept around so that he could see the bear's eyes, and sure enough, he had been turned into stone. Crawling soft-

ly and very slowly behind the bear, in order to be concealed by his great body, Myron saw a sight beyond that amazed him. There sat Bessie in the midst of a great circle of stone animals like a queen on her throne, and with cold, glassy eyes staring at the senseless creatures.

It was about 10 o'clock at night that they found the moon creepers, thousands of them growing at the edge of the forest, and they gathered enough, you may be sure, to cure a dozen Bessie. Then they built another fire and slept beside it. The sun rose in a clear sky, and they soon started to rescue the unfortunate girl. Mr. Granitt took half of the berries, for he had determined, also, to make the hazardous attempt to rub her eyes if Myron failed, so you may see how completely changed his nature had become. Glancing up as he wondered how he could avoid Bessie's baleful glances, Myron was dazzled by the bright sunshine, and, placing his hand in his pocket to see if his berries were safe, a brilliant idea flashed into his mind, an idea so brillant that it dazzled him more than the sunshine itself, and he smiled happily, for he had solved the problem.

The Merriest Christmas.

The Merriest Christmas,

This is how he baffled Bessie and accomplished the feat of approaching her and rubbing the magic berries upaccomplished the feat of approaching her and rubbing the magic berries upon her eyes. Stealing up close to the wide clearing, in the middle of which she sat, he took the water sprite's hand mirror, and, holding it so that the sun's rays fell on it he cast the dazzling reflection straight into his sister's eyes. She winked and blinked, turned her head this way and that, to avoid the glare, but she never suspected from where it came, and as he stole slowly up to her, keeping her completely blinded all the time, she at last covered her face with her hands. Then he stood at her side, for the deep snow had made his approach noiseless, and with a quick jump he sprang behind her, seized her head, and before she could turn to see what had caught her he hastily rubbed the moon berries all over her eyes and face until she looked like an exploded jar of raspberry jam. She shrieked once and then cried: "Oh, Myron! Where am I? What are you doing, you naughty hov?" for coming out of her terrible then cried: "Oh, Myron! Where am I? What are you doing, you naughty boy?" for, coming out of her terrible condition, she did not remember what she had been nor know where she was. Myron laughed gleefully and lifted her down from the rock. Then they told her all about her sad plight, and when she saw all of the stone animals she cried: "Oh, how pitiful! Can't we restore them to life. I can't bear to think that I've been so cruel!"

Just then the owl flew down and said: "Sprinkle the berries upon them, and they'll all revive at once."

So Bessie sprinkled them every one with the magic berries, and in a few

minutes the forest was alive with joy-ful animals, from bears to moles, frisk-ing around in the snow, and Bessie was happier than she had ever been. When she learned that it was Christ-mas day, for the owl announced it at once, nothing would satisfy her but a Christmas tree for all of the restored animals, but the owl soon showed her that there were so many of them that all the trees in the wood would be in-sufficient. "Go home," said he, "and you will find a tree that will make you minutes the forest was alive with joy you will find a tree that will make you jump, for all the children in Wishville have sent you things, and there's scarcely room in the house for one to

turn around in. Hurry up now or it will be afternoon before you get there." All the animals escorted them to the road, and there they howled a grand farewell, which made Bessie weep. fareweil, which made Bessie weep. When she got home, however, and saw all the marvelous things from Wishville she cried for joy and wanted to go to that land of bliss at once, but Myron assured her it was far nicer to have all these things at home, and he knew all about it. That was the jolliest Christmas they had ever seep for est Christmas they had ever seen, for when they had grown tired with examining new toys, they sat in the window ple who passed, and every one who was touched by a berry went immediately and bought lots of things for poor chil-dren, so that there never was heard so much laughing and rejoicing in the town before, and to this day the people refer to it as the "merriest Christmas." WALT M'DOUGALL.

The Star Boarder,

(Philadelphia Ledger.) Talking about palmistry with the star-boarder the other day, he casually re-marked: "The stenographer is going out for a drive this evening with her con-

ant."
"Show me the code," I whispered.
"It is all in the hands," said he, "The
ng shows he is at the door, and the
tes in her hand indicate she will do the

"Easy money," said I. "Is there any more news in sight?"
"Sure," said he, "I can tell a man's occupation by the hand."
"I'm from Joplin, show me a diagram,"

"I'm from Joplin, show me a diagram," I retorted.
"Well, you can distinguish a commercial traveler by his grip, a carpenter by his nails, a pickpocket by the touch, and a saloonkeeper by the joints."
"Wonderful," said I.
"Very fair, he admitted, "but the limit is where I tell time by the hands,"
"Which hand?" I inquired, holding out both my 'card-holders.
"The clock's," he answered, and there was a strike on the mantel.

